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Yale Divinity Quarterly

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THEOLOGY IN THREE WORKS OF MAETERLINCK.

By Robert L. Calhoun, '18.

A philosophical analysis of the work of Maurice Maeterlinck is much like the chemical analysis of a rose. The more successful and thorough-going the analysis, the less is left of the flower. If one takes the Blue Bird and translates it into such terms as animism, pre-existence and predetermination, he feels almost as though his act were sacrilegious. For Maeterlinck is writing not as a critic of religion and morals, like George Moore and Bernard Shaw; nor as a serious-minded reformer, like Churchill or Wells; and least of all as a champion of things as they used to be, like Chesterton. He is a poet first and a philosopher and theologian only afterwards. His only concern, so it seems, is to set forth in exquisite form his own ethereal imaginings about the world—for they seldom take the form of systematic arguments—not to make converts but just to let men see what he thinks and think with him if they choose. Sometimes, indeed, it is almost impossible to determine what he intends to set down as his own serious belief and what is pure fancy. This difficulty applies especially to the plays, where poetic license and the requirements of dramatic art frequently hide the author's philosophy under various gay-colored masquerades. The Essay on Immortality, however, gives a straightforward discussion of Maeterlinck's favorite theological topic, and throws light on the other works.

I. Mary Magdalene.

The drama, Mary Magdalene, is an elaboration and amplification of the Gospel references to Jesus's faithful follower. As Maeterlinck tells the story, Mary is a beautiful and renowned courtesan who lives in rich luxury as the mistress of several

Roman knights. Lucius Verus, a military tribune and captain of the guard under Pilate, is deeply in love with her, and after a long period of coldness she is about to accept his love, when she meets Jesus and his band at Bethany. Jesus saves her from stoning at the hands of the Jewish mob, and his personality fascinates her. She returns to Verus for a time, but at a summons from Lazarus, newly risen from the dead, she takes her place among the followers of Jesus. Her lover, to rid himself of the man whom he looks upon as his rival, now carries out the order which he has received for Christ's arrest, and puts the life of his prisoner into Mary's hands, offering to permit Jesus to escape if she will give herself to him. But Mary, torn for a time between the desire to save Jesus's life and the knowledge that she can do it only by betraying his teaching of righteousness, refuses to buy her Lord's body by killing his spirit, and Jesus is led away to Calvary.

There is not much attention to doctrine in this story, which is rich in its dramatic interest, but incidentally the author's view of several Christian tenets is laid bare. Of the Romans there is not one who really represents Maeterlinck's view, I think, although Silanus, a connoiseur-philosopher, speaks for him at times. Thus the author's view of the Old Testament, I suppose, is put in these words of Silanus: "The sacred books of the Jews are crude and bloodthirsty; but they also contain beautiful myths and the early efforts of an uncivilized but, at times, singular wisdom. 'They have not yet wearied me." Wonder-working, as we might have expected, Maeterlinck accepts without scruple and without comment, even to the raising of the dead. The raising of Lazarus is described in great detail by Silanus and a Roman companion, without the slightest concession to the sceptical view of Verus that "It was apparently a dead man whose health left nothing to be wished for." But in spite of this seeming naivete, the sound sense and the peculiar metaphysics of the author come out in two other remarks of Silanus: "I will conform my life to his teaching if what he teaches is better than what I have learned. By awaking a dead man in the depth of the grave, he shows us that he possesses a power greater than that of our masters, but not a greater wisdom. * * If he can convince

me that I have acted wrong until today, I will amend, for I seek only the truth. But if all the dead who people these valleys were to rise from their graves to bear witness, in his name, to a truth less high than that which I know, I would not believe them. Whether the dead sleep or wake, I will not give them a thought unless they teach me to make a better use of my life." With this declaration that Christianity must be judged on moral, not on magical grounds we must heartily agree, but most of us would disagree with this further statement, which involves Maeterlinck's metaphysics: "It should astonish us no more to see a man return to life than to see a child come to life or an old man leave it." This question will be discussed later in another connection.

The chief doctrinal content of Mary Magdalene is the view or, better, the views which it takes of the person and mission of Jesus. From the standpoint of the Romans, and of Mary at first, he is regarded as "a sort of unwashed brigand who entices the crowds with a rude kind of sorcery and, on the pretence of preaching some new law or doctrine, lives by plunder and surrounds himself with fellows capable of everything." To his teaching Silanus, the philosopher and literary scholar, applies such phrases as "curious", "rather singular", "a more or less silly anecdote, the story of a son who returns to his father after squandering his patrimony". How far this differs from the author's view is shown by the stage directions, which with consummate skill and delicacy, introduce Jesus only as "a wonderful voice, soft and all-powerful, intoxicated with ardour, light and love, distant and yet near to every heart and present in every soul"; "calm, august, profound, and irresistible". In Maeterlinck's eyes, Jesus at least is a unique man, endowed with supernatural power and personality. And he was determined on his own death as the necessary fulfillment of his mission. So Joseph of Arimathea assured Mary when she was forming wild plans for a rescue; and so Mary herself saw, as in a vision, while she was weighing the offer of Verus. "Ah, if you could see the sacrifice which is being accomplished here and which the very angels dare not look upon! * * I could save him in spite of himself, but no longer in spite of myself! * * If I bought his life at the price which you offer, all that he wished, all that he

loved would be dead! I cannot plunge the flame into the mire to save the lamp! I cannot give him the only death that could touch him! Were I to yield but for a moment under the weight of love, all that he has said, all that he has done, all that he has given would sink back into the darkness, the earth would be more deserted than if he had not been born, and heaven would be closed to mankind forever!" This is strong language—too strong for the facts, some would say. To represent God's whole plan of salvation as depending, even for ten minutes, on one single human being, whose wavering would "shut heaven to mankind forever", is not possible for most Christians, and in fact it is probably intended only to express vividly the significance which Jesus's death has for Maeterlinck. It is certainly true that without Calvary, in some form or other, Christ's life could not present so powerful an appeal to men as it does, and this truth the author is concerned to stress.

The topmost peak of theology touched in the book, if indeed the words in Mary's mouth really represent the author's own thought, is reached in a single sentence, unmatched elsewhere in the whole play: "To think that you hold there, in that human hand of yours, the life of the God of Gods, descended upon earth!" The Incarnation, in terms of a "high Christology", could scarcely be put in more concise and more unequivocal form. For one who holds a view that God is really immanent, in any significant sense, there is no need to quarrel with Maeterlinck here, except, perhaps, over choice of words. Without suggesting that Jesus was the only embodiment of God on earth, or that in Jesus God was present in some mysterious, magical way that disregarded human limitations, one may well hold that the life of Jesus represents the highest reaches of God's life under human conditions. That is saying, in essence, "The God of gods, living in this man a perfect human life."

II. THE BLUE BIRD.

It is idle to talk of Maeterlinck's motives for his various doctrines. He holds them just because he is the kind of man he is. His religion must necessarily be a religion to carry him up beyond the dust-clouds of commonplace reality, into the

spheres of wonder and of fancy. His philosophy is not a rough-hewn, work-bench pragmatism, to settle vexed questions in the market-place; nor is it a massive, highly polished, cunningly fitted Hegelian idealism, to make the universal rational; it is rather a fragile fabric of imagination and of appreciation, to make life shine with rays of eternal sunshine, looking backward and forward beyond itself and thinking high thoughts too vast for man to comprehend.

These characteristics will appear much more clearly in The Blue Bird, which is next to be discussed. The story of this fairy play is a familiar one: how Tyltyl and Mytyl set out under the guidance of a fairy to find the Blue Bird, "the great secret of things and of happiness"; how they search through the land of the past, the palace of darkness, the world of nature, the tombs of the dead, and the kingdom of the future; and how they finally find the bird in their own cottage, not quite so blue as the birds they had caught on their journey, but at least a real blue bird. There is no use in attempting to reproduce the action of the play, especially since our interest centers about two scenes, The Land of Memory, and the Kingdom of the Future.

Maeterlinck sets the text for the discourse on The Land of Memory in these words of the Fairy Berylune: "The dead who are remembered live as happily as though they were not dead." The scene itself pictures the two children as revisiting their grandparents and their little brothers and sisters, who had died. They find everything just as they remember it to have been in actual life: the surroundings are the same, the grandparents have not changed, and the baby is still crawling on all-fours. For, as Gaffer Tyl, explains, Riquette has stopped growing. "Nothing changes here." The "Others", as the dead people insist on being called, are wholly dependent on the living for their existence as live beings. When the living think of them they live: when they are forgotten they sleep again. Their lives after death are just their earthly lives reproduced in the memories of their friends. This doctrine does not, in fact, represent Maeterlinck's whole idea of the life after death, and its bearing must be made more clear in the next section. This much, however, I think it does mean: the only way in which the *earthly life* of men is continued after death is by means of the memories of their friends.

Another element in the author's thought which may be mentioned in passing is his animistic view of the world of nature. Pots and pans, trees and animals are regarded as harboring "souls" which although hidden from the ordinary gaze of men are yet conscious, and hostile to man, almost without exception. "Man is all alone against all in this world." Of course when such a doctrine as this—the doctrine that all nature is conscious—is put forth in the high-sounding language of metaphysical idealism or pan-psychism and backed with ponderous arguments, then it is well enough to answer that the scientist is able to find no traces of consciousness, or anything like it, in the world of inanimate things, and that a study of animal psychology shows animals to be just bundles of reflexes and instincts. But to answer Maeterlinck's fanciful presentation so would be turning heavy artillery on an air castle. If he is not speaking seriously then no answer is needed; if he is, then no answer is possible.

Next we must examine the author's remarkable Kingdom of the Future. In an azure palace which holds thousands of azure child-souls, and which is only one of thirty thousand similar palaces, time keeps guard. Here live the children waiting to be born into the world of men, and there are enough of them, as Light informs Tyltyl, to last to the end of the world. Each of these little creatures is working on his especial contribution to the world's history—an invention, a great idea, or perhaps an ingenious crime. Not one is permitted to pass the gate and set sail for the earth without some production of his own to take with him. For each of these children-to-be there is a day of birth inexorably fixed, and each morning Time dismisses the voyageurs for the day. There is no hurrying the time of departure and there is no escaping when it comes; each life is rigidly predetermined. The only freedom lies in the time before the day of birth. Each is permitted to work out his own ideas, but once the hour strikes for departure to the earth, the life must be lived as it has been planned.

Here again we face the absuridity of meeting a fanciful picture like this with prosaic arguments from the laboratory. But this time there is probably an underlying doctrine which is in fact the author's real belief: not that there is a realm of sky-blue children

who sail, ready-made, to their earthly homes on the day appointed for their birth, but that the souls of men exist in the eternal, infinite world before they enter the temporal, finite world. I think a systematic criticism of the view would rest upon two piers. First, the idea is apparently discredited by the scientific facts concerning heredity, embryonic development, birth, and growth of consciousness. The way in which a personality starts from rudimentary beginnings does not in any sense suggest a well-developed, pre-existent consciousness. Secondly, the idea has no obvious philosophic value, for it does not fit well into a truly rational universe. If, on the one hand, we can conceive of a human being entering life with nothing more than certain inherited tendencies, and certain physical and elementary mental equipment, and developing from such a beginning the phenomenon which we call moral personality by dint of reaction upon his environment, then there is no need for pre-existence of any sort to account for the facts of life. And if, on the other hand, there is a world of pre-existent minds, with well-developed plans of life, and with various original schemes thought out in advance, with social intercourse among the persons represented, then there is no apparent need for an earthly life. It would be simply living over again, under less favorable conditions, the life already laid out in the world of spirit, and it would mean shackling free spirits to a period of wholly wasted life. So in either of these cases there is an embarassing duplication of activity which has no place in a thoroughly rational universe. Since we cannot but accept the fact of a development on earth from a most primitive beginning, the union of two single cells, it seems reasonable to discard the notion of pre-existence.

III. Essay on Immortality.

We come lastly to consideration of the essay on Immortality and a fragment from The Wrack of the Storm which will serve as a conclusion. Probably the most convenient way to open this consideration is to outline briefly the argument of the essay. The author begins by declaring that nothing can perish. In the world as we know it no matter nor energy is ever lost. But men are not concerned about the mere imperishability of substance;

we mortals are supremely anxious that a particular small point in our conscious life, namely, our ego, shall be preserved after death. It is impossible to localize and define the ego satisfactorily, but it seems most likely to be centered in the memory, "which seems, in any case, one of the frailest faculties of our brain, one of those which disappear the most promptly at the least disturbance of our health." "It is a matter of utter indifference to us that throughout eternity our body or its substance should know every joy and every glory, undergo the most splendid and delightful transformations, become flower, perfume, beauty, light, air, star; it is likewise indifferent to us that our intellect should expand until it mixes with the life of the worlds, understands and governs it. * * I care not if the loftiest, the freest, the fairest portions of my mind be eternally living and radiant in the supreme gladnesses: they are no longer mine; I do not know them." "It seems to us that if our existence be not continued with the greater part of the drawbacks, of the pettinesses and blemishes that characterise it, nothing will distinguish it from that of other beings; that it will become a drop of ignorance in the ocean of the unknown; and that, thenceforth, all that may ensue will no longer concern us." "Any immortality that does not drag with it through eternity, like the fetters of the convict that we were, the strange consciousness formed during a few years of movement, any immortality that does not bear that indelible mark of our identity is for us though it were not."

This sense of a special ego, says the author, is in fact a sort of infirmity, a disease of our earthly selves. When we ask its continuance into the future, it is as though a man blind, deaf, and paralysed from birth should cling tenaciously to the poor, meagre life which is his, refusing to give it up unless his memory—if it may be called so—be continued. But suppose we think of that man as miraculously cured, with his memory of past days wiped out. The ego of the old sick man, is now gone. "And yet," says Maeterlinck, " will there not survive within him some sense or instinct, independent of the memory, the intellect and I know not what other faculties, that will make him recognize that it is indeed in him that the liberating miracle has been wrought, that it is indeed his life and not his neighbor's transformed, irrecognis-

able, yet substantially the same, that has issued from the silence and the darkness to prolong itself in harmony and light?"

The "sensitive point" at which the ego is located causes us no anxiety when it passes out of sight in our ordinary lives, during sleep and sometimes during waking hours as well. If an offer were made to put a man to sleep and guarantee that he should awake in a hundred years with body intact but without his memory, Maeterlinck thinks most men would welcome "what they would deem a miraculous prolongation of their life". And yet man is exceedingly concerned that the "egotic point" shall not be destroyed by death. Man thinks that animals are not granted continuation of their conscious existence, and animals are not separated from man himself by any such abyss as this assumption of personal immortality presupposes. In fact, when we face the question of immortality squarely, we must see that we cannot form an intelligent notion of it. We watch the body decay, and the mental faculties weaken or disappear, without fearing for the loss of the personality—yet we cannot say what more than the body and the mind that personality is. In short, we are thrown upon our imagination for "the choice of our eternal destinies." One alternative is annihilation, but this is inconceivable. A second is the continuation of self-conscious personality. This has already been discussed. It is, in fact, far more to be dreaded, if it were possible, than annihilation, because it would mean living on eternally n the narrow limits of the finite consciousness. "There remains the double hypothesis of an after-life without consciousness, or with an enlarged and transformed consciousness, of which that which we possess today can give us no idea, which it prevents us rather from conceiving, even as our imperfect eye prevents us from conceiving any other light than that which goes from infra-red to ultra-violet." It is useless to attempt to discover anything significant about consciousness, because since the investigator and the object investigated are the same, the result is simply a mirror perpetually reflecting itself, with no result of value. To say, then, that this is the only form of consciousness possible to us is to be unduly dogmatic. We should rather regard our present consciousness as "an organic disease of the terrestrial intelligence". Our best course is to give free rein to our imagina-

tions, following up the wildest possible fancies, which are more likely to be near the truth than are logical arguments from fact. Since the probability is that our destiny is consciousness on a far higher level than we can now conceive, "it now becomes a question of foreseeing its ways and of knowing what part of our intellectual and moral acquirements will pass into our eternal and universal life."

Such is the argument of the essay on Immortality. It would be a tedious job to single out each particular contention for criticism, so I shall simply urge two objections against the whole argument. There are, of course, certain elements which can be pointed out as beside the mark, from our point of view. Thus in a field which is primarily moral, it is idle to draw parallels between man and the lower animals, saying, "Man has no right to disown his poor relations." It is admitted at once, of course, that man started at the same place with the lower animals, in the protozoologic realm, but the only significant question for the moralist is, "How do they compare now?" A diamond is made of the same stuff that a chunk of coal is made of, yet we have not, until recent years, treasured up coal in our jewel cases. When man was an animal, he had no claim to superior consideration: but now he has become a man, a moral being, there is nothing to be gained by making light of the disparity. We may well think of God as careful to conserve the moral and intellectual values of personality without making him conserve also the physical and sensuous possessions of animals.

But apart from these irrelevancies, there are two main objections to Maeterlinck's theory, the first psychological, the second logical. The first is this: he falls into the error of the old faculty psychology in splitting up consciousness into numerous parts, and picking out one of the parts as the "ego". Modern psychology, of course, speaks only in terms of the whole consciousness as a unit. If it talks of an ego at all, the ego is not one element in consciousness, but the whole course of conscious experience from beginning to end of life, in all of its ramifications. With this conception of the ego in place of Maeterlinck's idea which corners off "memory" as a card house to hold the "egotic point", the chief of the author's difficulties is solved. The advocate of per-

sonal immortality is concerned not for the continuance of a single faculty, memory, but for a real continuity between the after life and the earthly life of the whole self. Maeterlinck's illustration of the miraculously healed paralytic, who in spite of lost memory feels somehow that he is himself, can be accepted without a tremor, for such a feeling of self-identity is all that we require as a guaranty of continuity. Of course in the last analysis, I suppose, our deepest concern is to find ourselves in a rational world. And it is for this reason that we are so insistent on the need for continuity between the earthly life and the after-life; because if the future life is something altogether unrelated to our present existence, then this present existence is utterly purposeless, and things do not work out so in a rational world. Think, for instance, of another illustration used by the author—of the man who should sleep for a century and wake up with no memory of past days. Many men, declares Maeterlinck confidently, would be glad to have such a prolongation of their lives. Now if all that is lost is just the photographic memory of past events, and the man still retains his feeling of self-identity and his normal control over his various capacities—the fruit of years of experiment—then the experience would not be wholly intolerable. But if the man woke up with his mind a blank, with life to begin over again, it is obvious that instead of lengthening his life he would have shortened it, because he would have to spend much valuable time in relearning what he once knew. That is the fault in discontinuity: it completely discounts past experience and makes for purposeless waste. Thus, we have argued as one criticism of Maeterlinck that continuity of life is essential to a rational world, and that such continuity is possible if one regard the self as the whole of conscious experience rather than as "the most precarious faculty" of the brain.

The second criticism is this: the author apparently confuses the persistence of the earthly consciousness with the persistence of consciousness *as* earthly. That is, throughout his discussion he reviles our finite consciousness as impotent, a fetter, a disease, and so on, and speaks as though it would be necessary to go through eternity with that self-same consciousness ungrown and undeveloped. My first feeling here is that he is over-strenuous

in his condemnation of the earthly intelligence, anyway. When he declares that it is preventing us from seeing reality, as the imperfect eye prevents us from seeing ultra-spectral light, his analogy defeats its own end. For, interpreted fairly, it would read thus: As our eye, imperfect though it be, gives us knowledge of light which we could not have without it, so our earthly mind, with its imperfections conceded, gives us all that we know about consciousness. And since the infra-red and ultra-violet differ from the known colors only in wave length, and so are essentially similar to those which our eyes can experience, we may think of higher levels of consciousness, as yet beyond our reach but still continuous with the consciousness we already possess by virtue of our earthly minds. Similarly when the author speaks of consciousness as a mirror, forever reflecting itself, he is using a figure which leads him astray. A mirror simply reflects and nothing more. It is static, passive. The mind, on the other hand, reflects as a mirror, perhaps, but it does more. It takes the images which appear on its surface and uses them for data, recombining them, transcending them, drawing inferences from them. This, in fact, is what Maeterlinck must have done in writing this particular passage on consciousness. Mind is not static and passive, like a mirror, but active and resourceful. It is by no means the weak thing that the author declares it to be.

But even at that we should hardly be willing to take with us through eternity the minds with which we quit this life. That is what the author decries when he speaks of dragging our convict fetters forever, and shutting ourselves up in so narrow a sphere that annihilation would be preferable. We may heartily agree with all he says about the necessity for wider vision and higher planes of thinking and feeling in the future life without giving up, as he does, the idea of continuity. I too want a bigger consciousness hereafter, but I want to grow into it from what I have now. It is my own progress that will give me real satisfaction. The reason we no longer sing "I want to be an angel" is because we want to be ourselves. It would be no great joy to be presented with a suit of angelic perfection just beyond the grave unless one could feel that one had actually worked up to it, with God's help, by his own efforts. There is not half so much satis-

faction in mere contemplation of spoils as there is in achievement. But Maeterlinck suggests that it would be impossible to carry over the imperfect earthly self into the higher perfection; it will be necessary to lop off some parts, and permit only select bits to pass over into the future. To this I should again object vigorously on the ground that the self cannot be split up at will; one's self is one's self, and that ends it. The whole of the earthly self must enter into the exalted self. And this seems not unreasonable. We should consider it somewhat absurd to take a child who is just reaching the age of adolescence and say, "Now this and this characteristic is not compatible with manhood. They must be erased so that the new life will not be tainted." If there are undesirable traits in the boy of fourteen, he must needs carry them with him until he gradually works them out of himself. And when that is done we think he is no worse man for having fought and won his own battle. Similarly, it seems to me, the whole of a man's self at the end of this life must be taken up into the next, and his attainment to clear vision will come by growth, not by magical transformation. So the second criticism has held that without violating continuity of life, the principle of growth can bring us to the higher levels of consciousness which Maeterlinck so desires.

This discussion may well close with an extract from Maeterlinck's latest book, The Wrack of the Storm, published in the midst of the invasion of Belgium which brings together into a single knot several threads which appeared in the earlier discussions. This quotation gives in brief compass a suggestion as to the author's entire metaphysical system, and the continuity of earthly and eternal life, which has just been advocated as against the earlier essay (1907) comes out in this last passage in sharp relief. The tone of the extract is strongly ethical and religious and its emotional stress is great. This is the passage: "Whatever be our faith and whatever the God whom it adores, one thing is almost certain and, in spite of all appearances, is daily becoming more certain. It is that death and life are commingled; the dead and the living alike are but moments, hardly dissimilar, of a single and infinite existence, and members of one immortal family. They are not beneath the earth in the depths of their

tombs; they lie deep in our hearts, where all that they once were will continue to live and to act; and they live in us even as we die in them. They see us, they understand us more nearly than when they were in our arms. Let us then keep a watch upon ourselves, so that they may witness no actions and hear no words but words and actions that shall be worthy of them."

THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE SCHOOL.

ARTHUR E. RICHMOND.

There *is* a kind of philosophy in the oft-quoted saying: "We should live in hope, even though we die in despair". But the philosophy is both crude and false. It is crude to the extent that the assertion is quoted without much intelligence being given to the actual content of the saying; and false, in that hope, if really cherished, can never lead to ultimate despair.

In regard to the Devotional life of the School, that which we so long hoped for, has come about—the actual devotional phase of our common Christian Life has greatly improved, and we are beginning to feel the real joys of Christian fellowship and worship in our Devotional Exercises. The improvement is due to the wisdom of our Faculty—first, in changing the hour of worship; second, in introducing monthly periods of testimony and praise, and last, but not in any sense least, in providing some of the most helpful and inspiring brief talks to which most of us, throughout our student days, have been privileged to listen. These changes have made possible the attaching of new meaning and importance to that phase of our School life, which was by common consent the weakest feature of the Yale School of Religion, and which, we all feel, should have been the strongest.

It may be profitable to inquire into one or two of the reasons (or were they mere excuses?), why, until the present time, we had so signally failed to create and maintain a happy, helpful, and heathful Devotional life; and in the first place I might sug-

gest that it was because we have all, more or less, placed undue emphasis upon what is perhaps the chief reason for which we are here, namely: our intellectual training and activity. It is true, no doubt, that we are here primarily to train our intellect, and increase our knowledge. To that end, all our powers have been increasingly directed. We have been literally borne down during the past three or four years of war activity, with a keen and ever deepening sense of the work there is to be accomplished when we shall have completed our training. Hence it is, that the whole of our attention is being given to the matter of "preparation". We have sought to fit ourselves for the work which lies before us, by following certain courses of intensive studies, so that when we find ourselves actually in the work for which we have tried to prepare, we may prove to be workmen, having no shame.

But there has been a serious danger lurking beneath what we believed to be our chief need in the period of "preparation". It is the danger that our zeal and enthusiasm for learning, has caused us often to forget that we have need of a higher training—a need of training which is essentially Spiritual, and which, in reality, and fundamentally, lies at the very foundation of our success as Christian Ministers. It is the danger that, in pursuing our courses of study as the chief end of our School career, we have or shall have been, "too much with men, and too little with God". Carried too far, this attitude may cause us to forget that we have this matter as an obligation, not only as far as we ourselves are concerned, but also as regards others. If we would radiate the presence of the Divine, we must "practice" that presence. The secret of all attractive personality is the enrichment of Spiritual life. Failing this, we inevitably and logically court disaster, as related to the winning of men n our life's work.

A second reason which might be suggested, as accounting for the neglect of our Devotional life in the School, is, that we have acquired the habit of stressing the importance of "activity", as compared with "meditation". A prominent New York preacher recently appealed to his congregation for the encouragement and cultivation of reverence and meditation, as aids to holiness. Recognizing how infrequent such attitudes were, on the part of

the majority of even Christian people, the preacher exclaimed: "Fancy meditation, in modern New York"! We too, in the Yale School of Religion, have laid all the emphasis on the active side of our Service, to the almost complete neglect of the waiting meditative attitude, so necessary to the development of strong Christ-like Character. Let us be perfectly clear on this point. I do not for one moment, minimize the supreme challenge for action—never more supreme than today; but I do contend that there is danger in erring too much on that side. Moreover, I am fully aware of the fact that, as students, we are frequently overwhelmed with assignments, and have often been forced to take advantage of the Chapel service period, to prepare papers and so forth, for recitations. But even so, can we afford to neglect a quiet hour with God—even for the sake of keeping up with our work? And it ought to be observed, I think, that a period of worship will serve invariably to revive our spirits, and quicken our activity, so that the time so spent, will be actual gain, and not loss. I may be wrong, but somehow or other, I cannot but feel that the whole atmosphere of our school life has been such that, Devotions are felt to be merely a secondary matter, and of no value as part of our preparation for Christian Service. It is not so! We are greatly in need of the Divine blessing and enrichment upon our daily lives, and *we* are the losers if this important phase of our Christian life and training is neglected.

One more reason is, I think, selfishness. A statement made just lately by our Dean, should make us all think. Relative to this very subject he remarked, "You are not here to 'get' all the while; something is expected from you"! The assertion is timely. There are indeed many things here in the School that we have come to get—things for which all of us should be profoundly thankful. But is that all? Have we no obligation as Dean Brown suggests, to contribute something to the life of the School? I believe we have. It is *expected* from us here as members of the Student Body that we should give ourselves in fellowship and prayer at least, to the service of all with whom we are privileged to associate. Most of us are conscious of having been negligent in this matter, and we ought to ask ourselves individually, "What do I contribute to the life of the School?" "How, and in what

way, is my presence here, helpful and inspiring to others." And after all, we are not cut off from the responsibilities of service *here,* simply because we have come to prepare for service *hereafter.* Our life, if it be true, will find expression now, in the immediate present.

The enrichment of the Devotional life of the School rests with each and every one of us. Shall we continue to shirk our responsibility, or endeavor to measure up to the Duty which is unquestionably the Duty of us all?

BOOK REVIEWS

Christian Belief in God. A German criticism of German Materialistic Philosophy. By George Wobbermin, Ph. D. Translated from the third German edition by Daniel Sommer Robinson, Ph. D. Yale University Press, 1918. Pp. xix + 175.

It is a satisfaction to see this useful little volume by Professor Wobbermin, published in the English translation of our former student and graduate fellow, Dr. Robinson. Dr. Wobbermin probably stands next to Toeltsche among the younger German theologians who have modified the Ritschlian procedure so as to make room for the results of comparative religion, the psychology of religion, and modern empirical metaphysics. In the present work the author undertakes to discuss and defend the Christian belief in God, in connection with the contemporary philosophy and the latest results of science. Special attention is given to epistocuology, cosmology, biology and psychology. The book deserves a wide reading; it will prove suggestive and helpful to thoughtful ministers and theological students. The translation seems to have been very well done.

Early in 1918, the writer of this review wrote to Professor Paul Wernle of Basle, Switzerland, asking him to write to Professor Wobbermin at Heidelberg, for a preface to this English translation of his work. Dr. Wobbermin responded, sending a German preface by way of Basle to New Haven; this was forwarded to the writer in France, and returned by him to New Haven, to the

Yale University Press. For some reason, however, the publishers decided against the inclusion of the preface, which the reviewer consequently ventures to offer to the editors of the QUARTERLY in the following translation:

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

"As a guest of Yale University I ventured to speak in her halls on questions of ultimate philosophy in the same year in which I had published my German edition of the work of William James, which deals with religious experience. It is no less a source of satisfaction to me that now an English translation, from the pen of Dr. Robinson, my book on the Christian belief in God is being published by the Yale University Press.

"In the preface to the above-mentioned edition of the James' work I indicated that while I could not agree with James in his so-called pragmatism, I could do so with reference to his evaluation of religious experience and in the idealistic optimism of his whole way of thinking. But this idealistic optimistic way of thinking also appears in the Christian faith in God; indeed, it is first in this Christian faith that it finds its full manifestation and at the same time its adequate foundation.

"However, in view of the circumstances of this present time, the objection is raised with double weight, that the idealistic, optimistic way of thinking and view of the world do not correspond with actuality, that they fall to pieces when brought into contact with the brutal facts of the actual world. What is to be said in reply to this?

"Well, the actual world shows, to be sure, that mankind still lags far behind the ultimate ideals and ends of the Christian religious faith. Still we must guard against a common and yet gross misunderstanding as to what constitutes genuine optimisim. It does not assert that the world as it is at present is perfect, nor that the life of man has under all circumstances a noble meaning. What it does offer, however, is that the world is always *becoming* more perfect and that the life of man can always *acquire* a noble significance. And it is just in this direction that the Christian faith in God enables such a genuine and sound optimism to reach its highest development. For it included

the conviction that it is the vocation and task of man upon the earth to co-operate in making this world ever more perfect and human life ever more full of significance, while both of these ends are to be realized by means of the forces of the invisible world and of the living God. For God himself—this is the heart of the conviction we refer to—desires to have men as his fellow-workers. Would that they might evermore be conscious of this great and responsible task and prove continually worthy of it! Then would they become continually more fully and deeply conscious of this, that as children of the one God they ought to be brothers to each other. "Georg Wobbermin.

"Heidelberg, April, 1918."

—D. C. Macintosh.

Historical and Linguistic Studies in Literature Related to the New Testament. First Series; Texts. Vol. II. Greek Gospel Texts in America. By Edgar J. Goodspeed. University of Chicago Press. No date. Pp. 169. 8°. $1.50.

Professor Goodspeed's work may always be relied upon. In preparing these descriptions and collations of Greek Gospel Texts in America at the instance of the Department of New Testament and Early Christian Literature of the University of Chicago, he has performed a service once far from urgent, now since the Freer purchase become indispensable. To have a reliable collation of this and the five important Greek cursives domiciled in America of which the monumental work of Von Soden took no account is a boon to scholars. It is to be hoped the list will soon be made complete. Meantime thanks are due to Professor Goodspeed and the University of Chicago Press.

B. W. B.

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SCHOOL NOTES.

One of the gratifying improvements during the past year has been the increased, devotional life of the School. For some time this has been felt to be lacking among the students. However, this year various steps have been taken that have been of great aid. The various classes have organized and are holding weekly prayer meetings. One Wednesday morning period a month is given entirely to a devotional meeting. Perhaps the most important step of all has been the changing of the chapel hour. Chapel is now held at ten o'clock instead of twelve-twenty. The attendance at Chapel has shown that this is a far more satisfactory hour. An added feature to the chapel hour has been the inspiring talks given by the professors. Prof. Weigle, Prof. Archer, and Prof. Dahl have given interesting and instructive talks.

One of the most active workers in the Near East drive for New Haven's quota of the $30,000,000 has been Mr. N. S. Malouf. Mr. Malouf himself comes from the Near East and of course is vitally interested in the work. Mr. Malouf has been speaking in the various theatres during the recent campaign. He appeared in native costume which added to the effectiveness of his appeal.

Fogg Scholarships. Class of 1919. John Wesley Prince, B. A., Wesleyan University 1915, M. A. Wesleyan University 1917, Middletown, Conn.; Arthur Enford Richmond, Shepton Mallet, England.

Allis Scholarships. Class of 1919. Ernest Lee Copley, B. A. Randolph Macon College 1914, M. A. Yale University 1916, Kenbridge, Va.; Percy Allen Davis, B. A. Hiram College, 1914, Big Run, Pa.; Samuel Hagop Jamochian, Marah, Armenia. Samuel Joseph Theodore, B. A. Cornell University, Aruppukota, India.

Class of 1920. Earl Everett Cummins, B. A. Hiram College 1917, Scranton, Pa.; Adolph Ingram Frantz, B. A. Tabor College 1916, Hillsboro, Kansas. Ira David Pinson, B. A. Benedict College 1912, M. A. Benedict College, 1913, B. A Colgate University 1918, Jenkentown, Pa.; Craig Walter Schwartz, B. A. Hiram College, 1913, Canton, Ohio.

The Campbell Club enjoyed a tea in the Day Missions Library on the afternoon of January 20. The Club was favored with the presence of Bert Wilson, Abe Corey, S. J. Corey, Mrs. Effie Cunningham, Miss Vauter, W. E. Cunningham, C. M. Yokum and A. McClain, who were in attendance at the Missionary Convention held at the Hotel Taft. Prof. Archer presided and introduced the various guests. Mr. Wilson, Abe Corey, Mrs. Cunningham and Mr. Yokum gave inspiring talks on the importance of the mission field at this particular time. W. Vernon Lytle, retiring president of the Club, responded for the students.

Among the new students who have entered school is Mr. Craig Schwartz, a graduate of Hiram College. Mr. Schwartz spent a year in Y. M. C. A. work at Camp Sherman, Ohio. He later received a commission as chaplain in the army, which position he was filling when the war came to an end.

The School of Religion handball squad has organized and has issued a challenge to Hartford Theological Seminary and to Union Theological Seminary. Wayne Edwards, one of the strongest players in the University, has been elected captain.

Mr. Wayne Edwards and Mr. W. K. Allen represented the School of Religion at the Atlantic Conference of the League to Enforce Peace, held in New York City. The chief speakers at the Conference were Ex-President Taft, Gifford Pinchot, Dr. Henry VanDyke, Mr. Norman Hapgood, and Mr. E. J. Walsh. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Allen both reported the meeting very much worth while. The spirit of the convention was, of course, entirely in favor of a League of Nations and this was heartily endorsed by our representatives.

Dean Brown has spent the last three or four weeks in visiting the leading cities of the country in the interests of the League to Enforce Peace. In the same party with Dean Brown were such men as Ex-President Taft, Dr. Henry VanDyke and Norman Hapgood. Such cities as Boston, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, St. Louis, etc., were visited.

On February 17 the Y. M. C. A. invited the School of Religion students to an informal reception. Music and various games added to the pleasure of the evening. Many of the students responded to the invitation and all reported a very enjoyable evening.

The Middle Class has started an innovation that should do much to enrich the social life of the School. Get-together meetings will be held weekly in the rooms of the various members of the class. The purpose will be to get better acquainted and to have good social times. The meetings will be strictly a class affair and it is hoped that class loyalty and school loyalty will be intensified. Mr. Mulder will have charge of these meetings.

Perhaps the subject most in the mind of the public at the present time is the League of Nations. This interest has also been very intense in the School. In an effort to bring the various opinions to a head, the DIVINITY QUARTERLY recently held a straw vote as to whether a League of Nations is advisable or not. The result of the vote was unanimously in favor of the League, not one vote being cast against it.

Friday evening, March 7, Professor and Mrs. Porter entertained the Middle Class at their home. Practically all the class and their wives were present. Various musical numbers and numerous games added to the pleasure of a very enjoyable evening. Later in the evening refreshments were served and the guests departed, unanimously declaring that they could not have been better entertained.

The Student Volunteers met Friday, January 24, in the Day Missions Library. Rev. Ostrum, a returned missionary from Japan, led the meeting. It was an open meeting and many others than Volunteers attended. After the meeting Rev. Ostrum had personal interviews with several of the students regarding work in Japan.

Thursday afternoon, January 23, Mrs. Brown and the ladies of the faculty were at home to the students of the School of Religion in the Lowell Mason Room.

Prof. Harlan P. Beach left for San Francisco where he sailed on the steamer *Shingo Maru* for Japan. He will be away until next fall and is going on an extended lecturing tour. He will visit several cities in China as well as in Japan.

ALUMNI NOTES

Mr. P. S. Guertz, class of 1917, who had sailed with his wife from San Francisco on October 7th, 1918, for Foo Chow, China, has reached his field of labor.

Mr. H. H. Hines, class of 1917, is called to the directorship of religious work of the First Congregational Church at Malden, Mass.

Mr. H. L. Meyer, class of 1917, is director of religious work of the Congregational Church, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Mr. Y. H. Krikorian, class of 1917, who has been taking graduate course at Harvard University, is working for his Ph.D. in philosophy and psychology.

Mr. L. W. Baker, class of 1913, recently died at Melbourne, Australia.

Mr. Charles L. Pyatt, class of 1913, after 18 months of Y. M. C. A. service in France has recently returned home.

Mr. H. A. Arnold, class of 1914, has accepted the call of Pastorate at Washington Street Congregational Church, Toledo, Ohio.

Mr. R. L. McQuary, class of 1916, who has been working in France as chaplain, having returned, accepted the call from the Disciples Church of Southland, Ind.

E. A. Thompson, class of 1916, after two years of war service in the Y. M. C. A., is called to the Congregational Church of Quincy, Ill.

H. B. Kirkland, class of 1912, is called to the Congregational Church of Pawtucket, R. I.

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